

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PC-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02  
SS-15 ICA-11 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /075 W  
-----079427 110044Z /15

P R 102315Z JUL 78  
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8751  
INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY LIMA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 QUITO 4736

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, EC  
SUBJECT: ELECTIONS PACE QUICKENS IN PENULTIMATE WEEK

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: RESPONSIBLE FOR MUCH OF INCREASED TEMPO  
OF NEXT TO LAST WEEK OF CAMPAIGNING WERE SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF  
MASS RALLIES, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF LAST FULL WEEKEND OF CAM-  
PAIGNING. SCATTERED INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE CONTINUED, BUT THE  
PROBLEM REMAINS A MINOR ONE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE WEEK OF JULY 2-9, THE PENULTIMATE WEEK OF THE PRESI-  
DENTIAL CAMPAIGN, WAS MARKED BY THE STRONGEST EFFORTS YET BY  
CANDIDATES TO PROJECT THEIR PERSONALITIES AND PROGRAMS TO THE  
VOTERS. SINCE BY LAW CAMPAIGNING MUST END AT 6:00 A.M. ON  
JULY 14, THE JULY 8-9 WEEKEND PROVIDED THE LAST CHANCE FOR  
MAJOR CAMPAIGN EVENTS ON NON-WORKING DAYS. ALL CANDIDATES  
HAVE STEPPED UP THEIR TRAVEL AND PUBLIC APPEARANCES, AS WELL  
AS MEDIA PPEARANCES. IN SPITE OF THE INCREASED TEMPO, THE  
CAMPAIGN HAS PRODUCED NO STARTLING DEVELOPMENTS. CANDIDATES  
CONTINUE TO CAMPAIGN ON THOSE PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND  
CAMPAIGN PROMISES THEY FEEL WILL WIN VOTES, RATHER THAN  
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ON ISSUES. TWO ISSUES, YOUTH VS. AGE AND THE CLAIMED  
CONNECTION OF VARIOUS CANDIDATES TO THE MILITARY GOVERN-  
MENT, CONTINUE TO BE PRESSED BY RODRIGO BORJA AND JAIME  
ROLDOS. SIXTO DURAN CONTINUES TO EMPHASIZE THE NUMEROUS  
PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSIONED DURING HIS TENURE AS MINISTER  
OF PUBLIC WORKS AND AS MAYOR OF QUITO AS EVIDENCE OF HIS  
CAPABILITY. THAT APPROACH HAS CAUSED OTHER CANDIDATES

TO RESPOND WITH ATTACKS DENIGRATING BOTH SIXTO'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR, AND THE QUALITY OF, MANY OF THOSE WORKS. RAUL CLEMENTE HUERTA, ATTEMPTING TO SEIZE THE GREAT MIDDLE GROUND, HAS DEVELOPED AN IMAGE INTENDED TO PLEASE ALL: EXPERIENCED, UNCOMPROMISED, AND CAPABLE.

3. BLANKET DISTRIBUTION OF POSTERS, NUMEROUS NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS, AND SPOT TELEVISION ADS CONTINUE TO HIGHLIGHT CAMPAIGN TACTICS. EVEN THOSE CANDIDATES WHO CLAIM TO HAVE MINIMAL FINANCING ARE APPEARING INCREASINGLY ON TELEVISION, UNDERLINING THE IMPORTANCE OF THAT MEDIA AND, INCIDENTALLY, RAISING QUESTIONS AS TO THE AMOUNT OF MONEY BEING SPENT ON IT.

4. TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE LAST FULL WEEKEND FOR CAMPAIGNING, SEVERAL CANDIDATES ORGANIZED MASS RALLIES IN QUITO AND GUAYAQUIL IN ATTEMPTS TO DEMONSTRATE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT. MOST IMPORTANT WERE RALLIES STAGED IN QUITO'S SAN FRANCISCO SQUARE BY RODRIGO BORJA (JULY 7) AND RAUL CLEMENTE HUERTA (JULY 8). NEITHER WAS AN OVERWHELMING SUCCESS. BORJA GATHERED NO MORE THAN 8,000 PEOPLE (2/3 OF THE SQUARE'S CAPACITY) IN WHAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE HIS STRONGHOLD. HUERTA, HOPING FOR A MASSIVE TURNOUT WHICH COULD BE PARLAYED INTO A BANDWAGON EFFECT, DREW A LITTLE BETTER, PERHAPS AS MANY AS 10,000. ALTHOUGH BOTH RALLIES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RECEIVED GOOD PRESS COVERAGE, INCLUDING PHOTOS WHICH MADE THEM APPEAR LARGER THAN THEY ACTUALLY WERE, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT MANY CONVERTS WERE MADE. IN FACT, HUERTA'S SOMEWHAT DISJOINTED RHETORIC HAD PEOPLE LEAVING THE SQUARE MID-WAY THROUGH HIS SPEECH.

5. HUERTA'S RALLY ALSO FELL VICTIM TO A SABOTAGE EFFORT WHICH FORCED A GOOD PART OF THE CROWD TO LEAVE EVEN BEFORE SPEECHES BEGAN. JUST AFTER HE ARRIVED AT THE PODIUM, ACCOMPANIED BY OTHER LIBERAL PARTY CANDIDATES, PERSONS UNKNOWN SET OFF SOME TEAR GAS CANNISTERS. IN THE ENSUING PANIC, A NUMBER OF PEOPLE WERE INJURED (AND A FEW POLOFFS IN ATTENDANCE WERE LEFT WITH STINGING EYES). THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT A SIMILAR INCIDENT DISTURBED A SIXTO DURAN RALLY IN ESMERALDAS A FEW WEEKS AGO, BUT LIBERAL PARTY CAMPAIGN MANAGER, PEDRO JOSE ARTETA, PUBLICLY BLAMED THE TEAR GAS INCIDENT ON DEMOCRATIC LEFT. VIOLENCE ALSO BROKE OUT IN MANABI BETWEEN LIBERALS AND VELASQUISTAS CAUSING THE GOVERNMENT TO SUSPEND ALL FURTHER POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN THE THIRD LARGEST PROVINCE. THE VIOLENCE, HOWEVER, REMAINS AT A FAIRLY LOW LEVEL AND THERE HAVE BEEN NO CONCERNS EXPRESSED EITHER PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY

BY POLITICIANS AND GOE OFFICIALS THAT VIOLENCE POSES A  
THREAT TO THE ELECTORAL PROCESS.

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6. SIXTO DURAN RETURNED TO GUAYAQUIL OVER THE WEEKEND  
IN PREPARATION FOR A MAMMOTH RALLY ON JULY 13. HE TOOK  
ADVANTAGE OF HIS TIME TO ASSOCIATE HIMSELF CLOSELY WITH  
THE FORTUNES OF THE MOST SURPRISINGLY SUCCESSFUL OF ALL  
MAJOR REGIONAL CANDIDATES -- ANTONIO HANNAH MUSSE WHO IS  
RUNNING FOR MAYOR GUAYAQUIL. HANNAH, A POPULAR, BUT  
HARDLY CHARISMATIC TELEVISION ANNOUNCER, FILED FOR MAYOR  
ALMOST AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT AS THE CANDIDATE OF THE  
FAMILY MANAGED APRE OR GUEVARISTA PARTY, AN OFFSHOOT OF  
THE CONCENTRATION OF POPULAR FORCES WHICH BUCARAM HAD EX-  
PELLED MANY YEARS AGO. GIVEN THE CFP'S TRADITIONAL  
ELECTORAL CLAIM ON CITY HALL, THE PRESENCE OF TWO OTHER  
CENTER-RIGHTISTS IN THE RACE, PLUS A DETERMINED BID BY  
CARLOS JULIO AROSEMENA TO ELECT HIS MAN IN COALITION WITH  
THE LOCALLY STRONG LIBERALS, HANNAH WAS ASSIGNED ALMOST NO  
CHANCE. HOWEVER, AT THIS POINT, ALL POLLS POINT TO A  
TREMENDOUS GRASSROOTS SWELL IN HIS FAVOR, AND THE VARIOUS  
PARTIES IN SIXTO'S CAMP HAVE MADE WAY FOR HIM AND JUMPED  
ABOARD HIS BANDWAGON. SIXTO BESTOWED HIS PERSONAL BLESSING  
ON HANNAH AT LESSER, BUT BERY WELL ATTENDED RALLY, AND  
PROBABLY IMPROVED HIS OWN CHANCES THEREBY.

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7. COMPARED TO THE OTHER CANDIDATES, ROLDOS HAD A RELATIVE REST FOLLOWING A SUCCESSFUL RALLY IN QUITO ON JULY 1. HE DALLIED IN QUITO HOLDING MEIDA INTERVIEWS, PREPARING HIS FIRST TELEVISION SPOT, AND PERHAPS MOST SIGNIFICANTLY, TALKING TO MILITARY OFFICERS. HE FOUND TIME TO ATTEND THE EMBASSY'S FOURTH OF JULY RECEPTION ACCOMPANIED BY HIS VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OSVALDO HURTADO. THE TWO RESUMED CAMPAIGNING WITH A SWING AROUND THE NEIGHBORING PROVINCE OF COTOPAXI, BEFORE RETURNING TO GUAYAQUIL FOR A SERIES OF LARGE RALLIES LATER THIS WEEK.  
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